

SGA to decide on WVCW FM format

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WVCW, VCU's campus radio station, wants to go FM. For now its chances appear to rest in the hands of the Student Government Association.

Jay Smack, WVCW general manager, said he will present to the SGA a plan for an FM transmitter sometime this fall to retrieve the \$30,000 SGA once allocated to the station.

Last semester, SGA decided to retain for one year funds earmarked for the station but not used.

SGA senators asked Smack to show them exactly how the money would be spent and gave him a fall deadline to report back.

"The SGA wants to know where the money will go," Smack said. "We are in the process of getting information and ideas for start-up costs, doing feasibility studies, looking into transmitter costs and tower rental since the station does not have one."

L. Victor Collins, interim director of student activities who also advises SGA, said SGA had questions about whether the station had done anything to help itself.

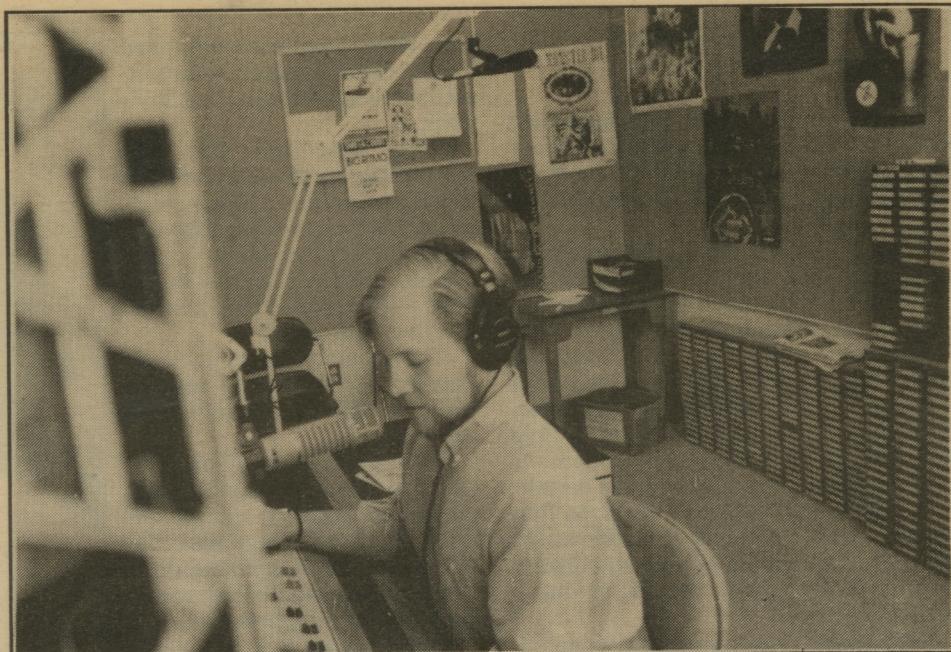
"They wanted to know how they were going to use the money," he said. "So they voted to pull the money back and allow the appropriations committee to review the matter."

Smack said the station would use the \$30,000 for looking into the feasibility of the project.

"This has been attempted before," he said, "but the idea was never followed through."

Collins said the SGA had no notion last fall of what the station's plan should be. He confirmed that the money is still available to the station pending the plan's presentation.

"We just want to see that there has been some work done by the station on this matter," he said. "The money is still there,



Bill Buckman/Commonwealth Times

GOOD MORNING, VCU — Jay Smack, WVCW general manager, chooses selections to play on the air. He will present a plan for acquiring an FM transmitter to SGA in an effort to reclaim \$30,000.

but the station must convince the appropriations committee of a viable plan worthy of the expenditure."

The station has an AM frequency, which can reach the campus and the dorms through the use of a carrier current via transmitter and telephone lines.

Smack insists that going FM will help WVCW and the VCU campus.

"Going FM," Smack said, "is like having a nationally ranked basketball team to enhance your recruitment."

If students are considering VCU for radio or other forms of broadcast, an FM frequency would make the school look that much better.

"FM would make us sound more professional. If our people know they are being heard they will sound more professional."

Smack said that if SGA does not allocate the money to WVCW, the station still will endure.

"If we do not get the money we will keep trying," he said. "We will explore other avenues. But it would in no way end the hopes of an FM station at VCU."

The station manager could not cite exact figures for obtaining an FM transmitter, saying no formal estimates have been sought.

"That would be like putting the cart before the horse. It's all theoretical at this point," Smack said. "Even if we got that money tomorrow, the FCC application process could take up to three years."

Collins said the appropriations committee plans to address the matter as soon as possible.